



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE**



**EASTERN VIRGINIA RIVERS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE COMPLEX
James River and Presquile National Wildlife Refuges**

Annual Activity Report, January, 2005

A. HIGHLIGHTS

B. CLIMATIC CONDITIONS

1. Fee Title

2. Easement

March 16th - ORP Brame met with C.C. Moore regarding the possible donation/easement of the property adjacent to Presquile NWR, Curles Neck Farm. This initial meeting was primarily for Mr. Moore to "test the waters". He had previously made an inquiry for a meeting with Project Leader McCauley, who in-turn forwarded him to me, due to my proximity to his residence. After the discussion McCauley was updated and the Trust for Public Lands and the Nature Conservancy was contacted. The USFWS Region 5 realty office was also informed.

June 3rd - ORP Brame and Nature Conservancy Rep. ??? met with C.C. Moore to discuss laws related to development near Bald Eagle Nests and the possible donation/easement of the property adjacent to Presquile NWR, Curles Neck Farm. Mr. Moore indicated that he and a group of developers were interested in purchasing the property. He was inquiring what type of tax breaks would occur if the wetlands were put into conservation status. He also wanted to know if the Service was interested some upland portions as well. Brame indicated that the Service's realty department is not actively looking into purchasing properties. However, there is interest in the track of land due to it's importance to neotropical migrant birds and bald eagle presence. Brame later mailed some literature to Mr. Moore regarding Bald eagle laws and confirmation of two nest located in the swamps of Curles Neck Farm.

3. Other

D. PLANNING

1. Master Plan

2. Management Plans

3. Public Participation

4. Compliance with Environmental and Cultural Resource Mandates

5. Research and Investigations-

December 14th- Archeologist Michael Barber investigated the Maycocks property shoreline at James River NWR.

October 18th- Archeologist Dave Hazard, VA Department of Historic Resources, Michaels Barber, Blue Collar Archeology and others from DOT and Flowerdew Hundred Museum came to Maycocks tract at James River NWR for a site visit. A future study will be conducted by Barber.

January 12th- Archeologist, Michael Barber and a team of four other investigators began study of the James River shore along the northern end of Maycocks. The project is part of a Challenge Cost Share Grant in partnership with the VA Dept. Historic Resources.

September 22nd- College of William and Mary archeological graduate students, Josh Duncan and Brian ? conducted site research for Michael Barber's Maycocks project. The project is part of a Challenge Cost Share grant in addition to Threatened Sites money from the VA Department of Historic Resources.

September 26th- Mr. Duncan and Brian ?returned to gather additional information about the Maycock study site.

6. Other

E. ADMINISTRATION

1. Personnel

May 31st – Mr. Tyler Gnegy began working as an intern at Presquile NWR. Gnegy is a senior at Virginia Tech University. His strengths in GIS/GPS, knowledge of farm equipment, and work ethic added him in the Refuge selecting him. Gnegy is from Strasburg, VA.

2. Youth Programs

3. Other Manpower Programs

4. Volunteer Program

October 19th- ORP Brame coordinated a group of volunteers in a debris removal project at James River NWR.

November 6th- ORP Brame met with Fran Lecke and other members of the Appalachian Trail Club to discuss possible volunteer projects at Presquile and James River NWRs. The several members of the group are federally trained in the operation of chainsaws.

February 19th-ORP Brame coordinated a group of fourteen volunteers in a trail maintenance project at James River NWR. The group, eleven of whom were from the Old Dominion Appalachian Trail Club, cleared approximately one mile of trail in the Maycocks section of the Refuge. Brame provided hot lunches from a local convenience store. The volunteers donated 56 hours of work.

March 31st- ORP Brame and MM Vick worked with several volunteers on varying maintenance tasks at Presquile NWR.

April 4th- Deadline for Intern Applications. Approximately 12 applications were submitted- five were chosen for interviews.

March 30-April 7th- ORP Brame interviewed intern candidates and ultimately selected Tyler Gnegy to serve as the summer intern.

June 30th- ORP Brame and Intern Gnegy visited the Virginia Living Museum in Newport News. The newly constructed museum houses hundreds of natural history examples applicable on properties of the EVRNWRC. Many excellent exhibits and live animal viewings offered opportunity to learn more about Virginia's rich environment.

August 13th & 14th - Over the two day work project, 16 volunteers donated 75 hours of service as they constructed a 60-foot boardwalk. The board walk, which will eventually connect to a new boat dock (schedule for completion in October), extends up the bank on the west side of Presquile NWR.

September 23rd- ORP Brame met with Campbell University Biology Graduate, Gretchen Young. Gretchen, geyoung@campbell.edu , voiced interest in helping with biological projects on the Refuge.

5. Funding

August 9th – ORP Brame attended the Prince George County Board of Supervisors Meeting and provided the County with the annual revenue sharing check, in the amount of \$18,294.00, from James River NWR.

August 24th - ORP Brame attended the Chesterfield County Board of Supervisors Meeting and provided the County with the annual revenue sharing check, in the amount of \$4,538.00, from Presquile NWR.

6. Safety

February 9th - Wooden materials from the fallen portion of the James River NWR pavilion and other solid waste debris was collected and placed in a dump truck. The truck was sent to the Charles City County landfill for disposal. Many additional trips are necessary to clean the area around the James River Check Station.

March 11th - ORP Brame purchased life jackets, from Bass Pro Shop, for the use of passengers participating on voyages on the Refuge's pontoon boat.

April 14- ORP Brame met with Prion Compliance to assess and provide estimate for an asbestos removal project on the pavilion roof at James River NWR.

July 1st – ORP Brame participated in a EVRNWRC Safety/Staff conference call.

May 8th – An oil spill occurred west of Presquile NWR at Osborne Boat Landing.

May 10th - MM Vick evaluated the Osborne landing oil spill and any contaminant issues that may affect Presquile NWR. No issues were sited.

July 6th & 7th - Prion Compliance and Testing Service (804-507-0039, Richmond, VA) collected and removed 1600 square feet of asbestos- containing roofing materials and miscellaneous debris at a cost of \$3,700.00. The collection activity took place on upright portion of the pavilion as well as from piles on the ground from previously fallen shingles. The licensed (#2705 051880) VA Class B contractor was provided payment upon receipt of the manifest.

July 22nd – ORP Brame coordinated with Harrison Lake National Fish Hatchery MM Darlington to take a load of debris from the James River NWR to the Charles City Landfill. Darlington used the Refuge's International Dump Truck. Money to clean some of the areas around James River NWR were acquired from the FWS Safety office.

7. Technical Assistance

8. Other

Each Month- ORP Brame reads the three electrical meters at Presquile NWR and reports those readings to Dee Hawkins of Virginia Dominion Power Company.

F. HABITAT MANAGEMENT

1. General

September 23rd- Richard Reuse of the VA Department of Forestry accompanied Brame to Presquile NWR to measure a buckeye tree that was thought to be a State record. Mr. Reuse measured the tree per protocol and added the points. Unfortunately, the tree was not a record but the fourth largest in Virginia. It is special because it is so much further east than the current champion. The tree is located near the dirt road, just south of the Refuge Managers House, near the outdoor tables. It has some rot high in the trunk, but otherwise healthy. The seeds must have been brought back east and planted on the old plantation which is now a wildlife refuge. The tree is not currently of any danger. Mr. Reuse said "First of this species I've seen in this part of state." Circumference=192, height=69, crown=68

May 14th – ORP Brame and MM Vick attended the ½ millionth acre celebration on the Rappahannock River. The entire staff of the EVRNWRC were on hand as representatives from the USFWS regional office, The Nature Conservancy, and other organizations witnessed the Service receive an easement for the Rappahannock River Valley NWR.

2. Wetlands

4. Croplands

5. Grasslands

April 12th- MM Vick and ORP Brame began mowing the fields of Presquile NWR to fight the invasive growth of Canada Thistle and Johnsongrass.

6. Other Habitats

7. Grazing

9. Fire Management-

January 26th, Fire Officer, Tim Craig met with Brame to look at habitat types at James River NWR. Craig also wanted to get more familiar with the age of the pine plantations.

February 3rd- Mgr. McCauley, Asst. Mgr. Owens, Biologist Spencer, and ORP Brame attended a Fire Mgmt. refresher at Great Dismal Swamp NWR in Suffolk, VA. The training provided useful information necessary for conducting prescribed burns.

May 9th – ORP Brame met Steve Walker, rep. from Forest Technology Systems. Mr. Walker was conducting inspections of the James River NWR weather station.

April 25th - ORP Brame aided with the prescribed burning of a 75 acre tract of land within the Rappahannock River Valley NWR. See pictures.

July 22nd – ORP Brame, Biologist Spencer and several members from the VA Department of Forestry conducted a site visit to James River NWR. The purpose of the meeting was for the Refuge staff to glean forest-related information from the Department as the Refuge plans to initiate a thinning project.

July 14th – ORP Brame met with Fire Officer, Tim Craig for a site visit of the pine plantations of James River NWR. Tim evaluated fire danger and possible thinning opportunities.

August 17th –ORP Brame met with Saul Garcia of Garcia Forest Service (910-997-5011 Rockingham, NC). Mr. Garcia conducted a site visit at James River NWR with plans to submit a bid on the 116 acre pine thinning project.

September 8th- Brame provided a James River NWR site visit for Ashby Brown of Woods, Water, and Wildlife, Inc. for the upcoming timber cruise project. Mr. Brown intends to bid on the project.

Week of September 12th – Brame once again revised Presquile NWR Fire Plan and forwarded it to Fire Officer, Tim Craig. With final approval pending, it is anticipated that a Fall or Winter burn will occur on the island refuge.

September 14th- Brame met with Cory Pulman of Puhlmans' Tree Service Inc. Mr. Puhlman has an interest in bidding on the 116 acre pine thinning project at James River NWR, scheduled along the narrow tract buffering State Road 640. Brame and Brown walked the areas of the project and discussed desired outcomes of the planned effort.

10. Pest Control-

January 6- Brame took containers of Glypro to Presquile NWR hazmat building. All pesticide is now safely and centrally located at Presquile.

May 10th – Spray contract for Presquile NWR invasive species control was awarded to Crabbe Aviation, LLC. from a group of five bids.

May 23rd – Crabbe Aviation, LLC. conducted a fixed-wing aerial application at Presquile NWR. The contractor applied appropriate volumes and ratios of the herbicide, Glyphosate to 250 acres of field habitat covered by the invasive species Johnson grass and Canada thistle. The spraying cost (airplane) was \$16.00 per

acre, with product (Glyphosate and Surfactant) provided by the Refuge. The period of the spray was from 8AM until 1PM.

June 4th – ORP Brame monitored the area sprayed for invasive species and found the kill to be topically effective.

August 18th – Through a cooperative effort with Region 4, a helicopter and operator was supplied to Presquile NWR for the purpose of spraying 250 acres of field habitat invaded by Johnson grass and Canada thistle. Although appropriate amounts of chemical (Glypho) and surfactant were available the spray rate was incorrect and approximately 20 acres did not get applied.

August 25th - ORP Brame monitored the 230 acres of sprayed field at Presquile NWR, and found the surface kill to be substantial. Most plants of Johnson grass was browned or browning. The hope is that the chemical was also absorbed in the underground rhizomes. That will not be determined until next spring.

11. Water Rights

G. WILDLIFE

2. Threatened and/or Endangered Species

April 18th - ORP Brame and MM Vick conducted eagle survey along Powells Creek and the James River. Within the transect from Windmill Point to the Refuge boat landing, 15 eagles were observed.

May 12th - ORP Brame and MM Vick conducted eagle survey along Powells Creek and the James River. Within the transect from Windmill Point to the Refuge boat landing, 24 eagles were observed.

May 27th - ORP Brame, MM Vick, and M. Zikes conducted eagle survey along Powells Creek and the James River. Within the transect from Windmill Point to the Refuge boat landing, 40 eagles were observed.

June 10th - ORP Brame, MM Vick and Intern Gnegy conducted eagle survey along Powells Creek and the James River. Within the transect from Windmill Point to the Refuge boat landing, 25 eagles were observed.

June 24th - ORP Brame, MM Vick and Intern Gnegy conducted eagle survey along Powells Creek and the James River. Within the transect from Windmill Point to the Refuge boat landing, 33 eagles were observed.

July 12th - ORP Brame and Intern Gnegy conducted eagle survey along Powells Creek and the James River. Within the transect from Windmill Point to the Refuge boat landing, 38 eagles were observed.

July 22nd- MM Vick, Intern Gnegy (and his parents Robert and Karen) conducted eagle survey along Powells Creek and the James River. Within the transect from Windmill Point to the Refuge boat landing, 37 eagles were observed.

August 5th- ORP Brame and Intern Gnegy conducted an eagle survey along Powells Creek and the James River. Within the transect from Windmill Point to the Refuge boat landing, 34 eagles were observed.

August 19th- ORP Brame, MM Vick, and NPS biologist Trivizas conducted an eagle survey along Powells Creek and the James River. Within the transect from Windmill Point to the Refuge boat landing, 27 eagles were observed.

3. Waterfowl

4. Marsh and Water Birds

5. Shorebirds, Gulls, Terns and Allied Species

6. Raptors

8. Game Animals

Other

December 19th- The Richmond Audubon Society completed the annual Christmas Bird Count at Presquile NWR.

November 5th- ORP Brame met with VCU Professor Charles Blem regarding the prothonitary warbler research Dr. Blem has been conducting at Presquile NWR for the past 15 years. Dr. Blem will be retiring in 2005 and discussions of how the program would continue was discussed. Several VCU representatives had voiced an interest in taking over the project. Also mentioned was to involve the organization Earthwatch International to attract paying volunteers to participate in some aspects of the research.

See attached PowerPoint.

November 12th- ORP Brame met with Paul Bedel concerning possible location of the 2005 BioBlitz at Presquile NWR. The VA BioBlitz attracts professors and field scientist of varying fields of study from throughout the region to survey as much flora and fauna as possible within a 36 hour period. Although there is no running water available on the island, the site seemed suitable with Bedel.

March 3rd- ORP Brame was informed by MM Vick that at low tides the southeast

corner of Presquile NWR often exposed a large number of shark teeth. A visit proved the information was accurate. Sixty-six shark teeth were found in 15 minutes of searching. Most of the teeth were from sand, lemon, Mako, and tiger sharks. During a time called the Yorktown Formation, twelve types of sharks lived in a sea that reached as far as Richmond 3 ½ - 7 million years ago. The teeth are currently maintained in the Charles City office for future use in an exhibit.

September 17th- ORP Brame observed a box turtle and a spotted turtle within two feet of each other near the James River NWR Check Station. Brame thought it unusual that the two were together and that the spotted turtle was so far from water. See photographs.

H. PUBLIC USE

1. General

November 4th- ORP Brame attended a James River Advisory Council, James River Days planning meeting at the Richmond Office of the VA Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. During the meeting events were tentatively planned for the extensive program brochure. Brame confirmed that several dates would include both Presquile NWR and James River NWR.

2. Outdoor Classrooms – Students

June 20th & 21st – Virginia Commonwealth University Community Services Coordinator, Anne Wright lead the two day visit to Presquile NWR as part of VCU's Summer Discovery Program. Eight sixth and seventh graders caught and released dragonflies, butterflies and other insects. The group also conducted GPS mapping projects and identified bird, reptile, and mammal species. Water quality monitoring along the shores of the Refuge helped the students get better understanding for science and technology.

3. Outdoor Classrooms – Teachers

August 25th – ORP Brame met with Janit Potter, of the Friends of Chesterfield Riverfront, and several other partners to review logistics and coordinate for the upcoming teacher training.

August 31st - The Presquile NWR hosted the Chesterfield County Public School In-Service teacher training. Partners from the Friends of Chesterfield's Riverfront, Chesterfield County Parks and Recreation Department, Virginia Department of Forestry, and Richmond Audubon, among others, helped convey information, offered useful educational tools, and demonstrated student activities that tied to science related Standard of Learning curricula. Thirteen teachers from five schools within the Chesterfield School District participated.

4. Interpretive Foot Trails

November 6th- ORP Brame and Naturalist John Coe led 16 participants on a pontoon tour and island sojourn at Presquile NWR.

February 11th-Barbara Wall to walked a portion of the James River NWR. She coordinated her visit by making prior reservations.

April 4th- ORP Brame allowed access for Ms. Cook to visit Presquile NWR. She and a relative were interested in looking for the “Watkins grave” .

April 9th – ORP Brame coordinated with the Appalachian trail club to hike the interior circle of the James River NWR. Twelve visitors participated in the 7? mile hike- believed to be the first of it's kind on the Refuge.

April 16th- Ten scouts and four adults visited the Hunter Circle trail at James River NWR. The group coordinated with ORP Brame prior to the visit.

June 23rd – ORP Brame coordinated the visit of Alison Uehling and family to Presquile NWR. The group of five were interested in walking the ground and viewing wildlife.

August 31st –Bill and Mary Anne Johnson? visited Presquile NWR and walked the trails. The Johnsons volunteer at John Heinz NWR in Philadelphia, PA and wanted to see refuges outside of their state.

September 10th- The James River NWR roads were open to the public as part of a special “field day”. Visitors could walk, without reservations, along the 13 miles of refuge. The event was minimally advertised because this was the first time such an event has occurred. Subsequent years advertisement will be incrementally elevated until carrying capacity and safety concerns are better evaluated.

5. Interpretive Tour Routes

October 5th- Sixteen visitors participated in a Pontoon Tour of Presquile NWR.

October 28th – Twelve members of the Commonwealth Society, a support group for Virginia Commonwealth University, participated in a pontoon boat tour around Presquile NWR. The 1 ½ hour tour, led by ORP Brame, provided opportunity to learn about the Refuge and observe wildlife.

April 16th- A Canoe/Kayak trip at James River NWR was scheduled through the James River Days and advertised on the James River Association website, but participants attended. Additional advertisement will occur for future events.

May 19th – ORP Brame and MM Vick lead a pontoon tour around Presquile NWR.

Sixteen participants attended the tour. The event was in partnership with the Chesterfield County Parks and Recreation Department. Naturalist Mark Batista, CCP&R, helped to coordinate the event. Eight eagles were observed among other species. The mission of the Service and history of the island were discussed.

May 21st – ORP Brame and MM Vick lead a pontoon tour around Presquile NWR. Fifteen participants attended the tour. The event was tied into the James River Association's James River Days. Participants were required to pre-register on the James River Association's website. Eight eagles were observed among other species. The mission of the Service and history of the island were discussed.

June 4th – ORP Brame and MM Vick led a pontoon tour around Presquile NWR for members of the Richmond Audubon Society. Fifteen participants viewed ten eagles and numerous other species. The event also included a tour on the island refuge with Naturalist, John Coe leading.

September 17th - Brame coordinated with the James River Association to offer a morning canoe/kayak trip as part of the James River Days at James River NWR. The trip attracted participants that had their own canoe/kayak and previous water experience. Ten participants paddled approximately 4 miles along the tranquil Powells Creek. The group "put-in" below the Check Station near the dike.

6. Interpretive Exhibits/Demonstrations

June 1st - ORP Brame conducted a program on VA reptiles at the Hanover County Agriculture Day. Brame spoke with hundreds of third graders throughout the day. Previously scheduled for two days this annual event was cut short due to rain the second day. Assisting with the event was Intern Gnegy, who collected several reptiles and amphibians for interpretation.

7. Other Interpretative Programs

8. Hunting-

October 2- 16: Thirteen days of white-tailed deer archery hunts were offered at James River NWR. Twelve hunters pre-registered for season or daily passes. Participation during the hunt equated to 36 hunter use days. Only one deer was harvested – a button buck.

October 19: ORP Brame sent James River NWR and Presquile NWR Shotgun Season press releases to The Hopewell News and the Progressive Index.

October 23: Deer hunting scout day was offered to interested participants at Presquile NWR.

October 30: Conducted the first of two white-tailed deer muzzleloader hunts at James River NWR. This is the first time muzzleloader hunting has been allowed at the Refuge.

November 1: Conducted the season's second and final white-tailed deer muzzleloader hunt at James River NWR. During the two muzzleloader days, five deer were harvested with 23 hunters participating.

November 13, 15, 26, & 27: Conducted white-tailed deer shotgun hunt at James River NWR. Two hundred and forty-six hunters participated during the four days and harvested twenty-six deer.

November 18: Individuals interested in participating in the November 19 deer hunt on Presquile NWR began camping out for the first come first serve event. The first person (Doug Basham) arrived around noon. This individual would begin taking sign-ups as people came in. Into the night, the system broke down. After waiting for hours some hunters did not even realize there was a sign up sheet. Some people that were not present were being signed up, and Basham began turning people away because the list was full, although he did not accurately know the number of slots available for hunting. One fight broke out and the Chesterfield County Police responded. Charges were placed against Tim Williams. Reports (from others waiting in line) of drinking were brought to ORP Brame's attention the next morning. Mr. Williams was not reported to have been drinking.

November 19: Conducted first of two white-tailed deer shotgun hunts on Presquile NWR. This is the first hunt since the Refuge closed hunting after the 2000 season. Large numbers of hunters were turned away, due to limited hunt locations on the island. The cable ferry was operated to transport participants to the Refuge. Forty-five deer were harvested by 52 participants. The huge amount of deer harvested was somewhat anticipated given the three years of no hunting. See nice several of the bucks harvested (Pictured).

November 20: Conducted second and final white-tailed deer shotgun hunt on Presquile NWR. Five deer were harvested with 28 hunters participating. Some of the deer harvested (see pictures and e-mail) looked thin. The Brian Moyer, Biologist, VDGIF was informed.

SEE ATTACHED POWERPOINT OVERVIEW OF 2004 REFUGE DEER HUNT

January 7th- Brame sent Deer Check Card/book to biologists from VA Dept. of Game and Inland Fisheries.

January 10th- Brame and LE Officer Laskowski attended the hearing of Mr. Tim Williams in Chesterfield County Courthouse. Mr. Williams was charged with assault and convicted as a result of an incident occurring at Bermuda Hundred prior to our Nov. 19th Deer Hunt. Mr. Williams has served as a volunteer in the past. The court

required Mr. Williams to serve 60 days jail time. Mr. Williams appealed and ultimately had to pay a fine, but no jail time was served.

January 20th- Matt Miller contacted Brame to inquire about the hunt programs coordinated at James River NWR, and Presquile NWR. The purpose of the phone conversation was to help provide a comprehensive list of hunt information that will be used in a book for the general public. Each Refuge will be solicited for information.

January 28th- Brame sent deer jaw bones as part of the agreement to participate in the DMAP program with the VA Dept. of Game and Inland Fisheries. Brame sent them to biologists from Prince George County and Chesterfield County.

January 31st- The EVRNWRC staff meet to discuss hunt dates and regulations for the 2005 hunt program.

September 10th- The refuge roads were open to hunters interested in scouting for the upcoming archery hunt.

September 19th- The deadline for the James River NWR archery season closed with twenty applicants provided seasonal and daily Refuge Permits.

9. Fishing

11. Wildlife Observation-

April 12th- ORP Brame allowed Tony Hathaway and a guest access to Presquile NWR for purposes of nature photography around the island. Mr. Hathaway was traveling from the D.C. area for this purpose.

June 26th- ORP Brame allowed Mr. Eckert access to put-in a kayak to paddle around Presquile NWR.

July 16th- ORP Brame allowed Mr. ?? access to put-in a kayak to paddle around Presquile NWR.

July 29th – ORP Brame allowed access to the cable ferry landing across from Presquile NWR for the purpose of Mr. Bob Rogers and his grandkids to view the osprey nest located on a light tower above the ferry.

August 26th -ORP Brame allowed ??? access to put-in a kayak to paddle around Presquile NWR.

17. Law Enforcement

September 12th- Gregory Kelly of Richmond paid the citation given to him by officer Tom Laskowski as result of a trespass and open fire violation on Presquile NWR.

Brame and Laskowski were prepared to represent the Service the following day in Richmond Federal Court, prior to knowledge of the citation being paid.

18. Cooperating Associations

September 25th- Brame attended the James River Association's Annual Meeting at Flowerdew Hundred Museum and Plantation. Guest Speaker, Patrick Noonan, past president of the Nature Conservancy and current chairman of the Conservation Fund provide a motivating talk about the John Smith Water Trail. Brame spoke to Mr. Noonan after the meeting about land acquisition for James River and Presquile at the prompting of Mr. Noonan. The meeting also provide a good opportunity to speak with the Flowerdew owners (George and Cindy Harrison) about partnerships. Flowerdew is located adjacent to James River NWR as well as an inholding property.

July 28th – ORP Brame attended the James River Advisory Counsel meeting. The group consists of varied organizations with interest in the health and promotion of the James River. Brame was invited to become an active member of the counsel.

I. EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

1. New Construction-

January 25th- Jim Batland from the Prince George County Health Department came to the proposed site of the new storage building to review the drainage and inspect building location. Due to the rain, no test were conducted.

February 1st- Jim Batland from the Prince George County Health Department came to the proposed site of the new storage building to review the drainage and inspect building location. Three test holes were evaluated. Test results would be available in the coming weeks.

February 22nd- ORP Brame received a letter from Mr. Batland, Prince George County Health Department stating the test did not pass the perk inspection. "Insufficient depth of suitable soil to seasonal water table" was cited. An alternate site is now required for placement of the maintenance building.

March 10th- ORP Brame met with Paul Smith of Harbor Dock and Dredge regarding the dock project at Presquile NWR.

March 17th- ORP Brame resubmitted request for the Prince George County Health Department to conduct drainage tests and inspect the alternate site for the proposed storage building at James River NWR.

April 19th- Jim Batland from the Prince George County Health Department to check site as described above. ORP Brame directed Batland to the site.

April 25th - ORP Brame was notified that the perk test once again failed due to "Insufficient depth of suitable soil to seasonal water table". With receipt of this news Brame began to pursue a third possible site for the James River NWR storage building- the pavilion site (next to the check station).

April 28th - An 18' x 20' x 6' metal shed was purchased from Newmart Builders Inc at a cost of around \$800. The shed will be used to temporarily house some of tools and equipment at James River until the new storage building is constructed. The previous site for these items was the pavilion, which as been deemed a safety hazard and is schedule for demolition.

May 18th – ORP Brame met with VA Marine Resources Commission representatives, Ben Stagg and Randy Owen to discuss permit approval for the proposed dock at Presquile NWR. The dock is proposed to extend approximately 70-feet into the James river on the west side of the island. An additional project site evaluated by Mr. Stagg and Mr. Owen was the dredge project at the mainland side cable ferry. Both Stagg and Owen were confident the projects would be permitted by summer. The US Army Corp of Engineers had previously provide permission for the dredge project.

July 7th - ORP Brame, MM Vick and Volunteer Pelter tour down the remaining dilapidated portion of the pavilion at James River NWR. MM Vick operated a winch tied to the top of the roof to bring the structure to the ground.

July 13th – ORP Brame and Intern Gnegy removed wood and debris caused from the downed pavilion. Once cleared the 72'x32' slab of concrete was exposed to the sunlight for the first time in 40 years.

July 26th – ORP Brame sent in a final proposal for the James River NWR storage building. The proposal was forwarded from the EVRNWRC Warsaw office to Hadley for processing.

August 8th-12th - ORP Brame and Intern Gnegy installed 6"x6" posts for the proposed boardwalk on the west side of Presquile NWR. The posts were acquired through a \$300.00 donation from the Richmond Audubon Society.

August 13th & 14th - Over the two day work project, 16 volunteers donated 75 hours of service as they constructed a 60-foot boardwalk. The board walk, which will eventually connect to a new boat dock (schedule for completion in October), extends up the bank on the west side of Presquile NWR.

August 17th and 18th – A-1 Landscaping and Tree Service downed several trees and trimmed others at James River NWR in preparation for the new 72'x 32' building scheduled to be erected where the old pavilion once sat.

2. Rehabilitation-

Various days in January- Brame completed reroofing the Check Station at James River. The shingles were old and in need of repair even prior to the hurricane damage incurred in Sept of 2003.

February 8th- ORP Brame and MM Vick discovered the pilings used for guidance with the Presquile NWR cable ferry had been altered. With the misshapen pilings, the cable ferry was unable to connect to the island. Brame sent a letter to the Coast Guard inquiring who the culprit might be.

February 14th- Brame received a message from a Lt. Chris O'Neil of the US Coast Guard stating he had received our letter regarding the cable ferry pilings. A site visit is proposed.

March 18th- ORP Brame met with David Hichak, P.E. from Philip Morris USA, Park 500. Mr. Hichak is Staff Environmental Engineer and was contacted by Brame to discuss the proposed dredge project at the Turkey Island Ferry landing. Presquile NWR is located across the James River from the Philip Morris property. For permit requirements, adjacent land owners must be informed and available for comment on any US Corps of Engineer approved project. Mr. Hichak completed the form and offered financial assistance with future programs at Presquile.

May 11th- ORP Brame contacted an electrician to repair the air conditioner in the Charles City EVRNWRC Office.

May 26th – ORP Brame met with contractor Danny Winall of Water's Edge Marine in hopes of obtaining a bid for repair of the damaged cable ferry pilings. A site visit, using the FWS jon boat, helped to describe to the contractor the needs of the project. (After reviewing the project, no bid was submitted.)

June 20th – ORP Brame and Intern Gnegy repaired the storm damaged roof of the maintenance equipment shed. The project required reuse of the thin zinc panels that had been previously torn off by Hurricane Isabelle.

June 28th – ORP Brame and Intern Gnegy repaired the storm damaged roof of the carpentry building at Presquile NWR. New zinc panels and screws had been purchased for the repair project.

July 1st – MM Vick and Intern Gnegy removed and replaced tires on the Ford farm tractor.

July 15th – ORP Brame, MM Vick, and Intern Gnegy used the tractor at Presquile NWR to pull the misshapen ferry pilings out of the passage way of the cable ferry. Vick chained the pilings together to keep them out of the ferry's way. A welder will have to permanently attach the cluster of pilings for a secure hold. The ferry can now move from the mainland to the island unimpeded (other than the problem with silt deposited on the mainland side).

3. Major Maintenance

4. Equipment Utilization and Replacement-

June 6th – ORP Brame, MM Vick, AM Owens and MM Owens met to discuss SAMMS and its implementation at the EVRNWRC.

Throughout September- MM Vick improved the lower segment of Hunter Circle Road by means of grader, chainsaw and gravel.

January 3rd- Brame finds the James River Check Station with ruptured pipes. Prevailing cold weather and lack of heat caused the pipes to burst. Power was cut off to the pump and Luther Vick repaired broken pipe. To prevent future incidents, a heater was purchased along with installation tubing.

January 28th- Ordering of the new farm tractor for Presquile was completed by Brame.

February 10th- ORP Brame met some staff from the Rappahannock NWR at the old Prince George Refuge office (now occupied by the James River Associations River Keeper). Several file cabinets were removed for placement in the Warsaw office and Charles City office. Numerous pieces of office equipment and files remain in the old office.

5. Communications Systems

6. Computer Systems

8. Other

March 2: ORP Brame, MM Vick, and Volunteer Pelter prepared the 19?? ____ pickup truck for transfer. The vehicle was cleaned and the wench was removed.

J. OTHER ITEMS

1. Cooperative Programs-

December 2nd- ORP Brame met with Stacy Mold, (804-775-0951) Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay regarding possible joint projects at Presquile NWR.

January 21st- Brame and Biologist Spencer attend the Important Bird Area technical meeting in Ashland, VA. The group discussed potential IBA sites and the need to complete some of the nominated sites. Presquile NWR has been nominated (along with some other area sites) for the prothonotary warbler population.

February 14th-ORP Brame met with staff of the Friends of Chesterfield Riverfront to discuss environmental education partnership possibilities at Presquile NWR. Janit Potter and Melissa Caviness represented the Friends and were very supportive of promoting programs with the Refuge. A Chester Middle School site visit and Fall teacher training were some of the action items initiated.

February 14th- ORP Brame met with Stacey Molds, Alliance of the Chesapeake Bay and Anne Wright, VCU to discuss grant opportunities and outreach. Two grants are proposed to involve Presquile NWR.

February 17th & 18th- Mgr. McCauley, ORP Brame, staff from the Harrison Lake Fish Hatchery, FWS Ass. Regional director Jamie Geiger attended a two-day event promoting the possible partnership of VCU and the FWS. The group discussed ways to use synergy generated from like natural resource goals and proximate locations of the Rice Center (VCU) and the Refuges and Hatchery.

September 28th- FWS Ass. Regional Director Jamie Geiger, Harrison Lake Fish Hatchery Manager, Mike Odom and ORP Brame spoke to the VCU Rice Board of Trustees at the Hatchery. The presentation topic was an introduction of projects and activities taking place on the James River Refuge's (Presquile NWR/James River NWR) and the Hatchery. Dr. Huff, Garman, Smock were in attendance with approximately 25 board members. The PowerPoint presentations were received by the audience as highly informative and should serve useful in aiding the Board to make a partnership with the USFWS a top priority.

3. Training and Items of Interest

March 21st-25th- ORP Brame attended Service Asset Maintenance Management Systems (SAMMS) training at the National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, WV. Implementation of the new system is planned to be in place for FY06.

July 8th – ORP Brame completed the Department of Interiors' Discrimination and Whistleblowing in the Workplace Training or "No Fear Training". The program was completed online from a disk provided by the Regional Office.

July 28th – MM Vick completed the Department of Interiors' required "No Fear Training". ORP Brame operated the computer program and read the text while MM Vick responded.